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Office of Current Intelligence
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CURRENT INTELLIGENCE MEMORANDUM

SUBJECT: Comment on Sino-Soviet Exchange of Letters

1. The exchange of letters between the Soviet and Chinese parties indicates that the dispute between them will soon enter a stage in which skirmishing around a negotiating table will replace open polemics.

2. Each side has now put itself on record as favoring bilateral talks in preparation for an international Communist meeting. However, the positions taken in the letters makes it likely these talks will drag on for a long period before mutually satisfactory arrangements for a general meeting can be made. The Chinese note that if discussions can not be concluded in one session, "several should be held" and even propose that, if these fail, the two parties "should hold further bilateral talks."

3. The differences between the two parties are so fundamental, however, that even if arrangements could be made for an eventual international conference it is unlikely that a meaningful resolution of these differences could be achieved.

4. The Chinese invitation to Khrushchev to head a delegation to Peiping for the talks is a cynical counter to the Soviet suggestion that the talks be held on a high level. The Chinese can hardly expect him to accept after the coldly contemptuous treatment they accorded him in the four major editorials published between the time Khrushchev's letter suggesting talks was received and Mao sent his reply. The Chinese have prepared for Khrushchev's refusal by inviting a delegation headed by any "responsible official" and even suggesting that a Chinese delegation could go to Moscow.

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5. The Chinese used the interval between the delivery of the Soviet letter and the publication of their reply to set forth, in massive documentation, their positions in the dispute. Having done so, they now express a willingness "to temporarily suspend" what they term their replies to attacks on their party. However, the Chinese letter hastens to add that Peiping "reserves the right" to renew the polemic whenever they feel it justified.

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